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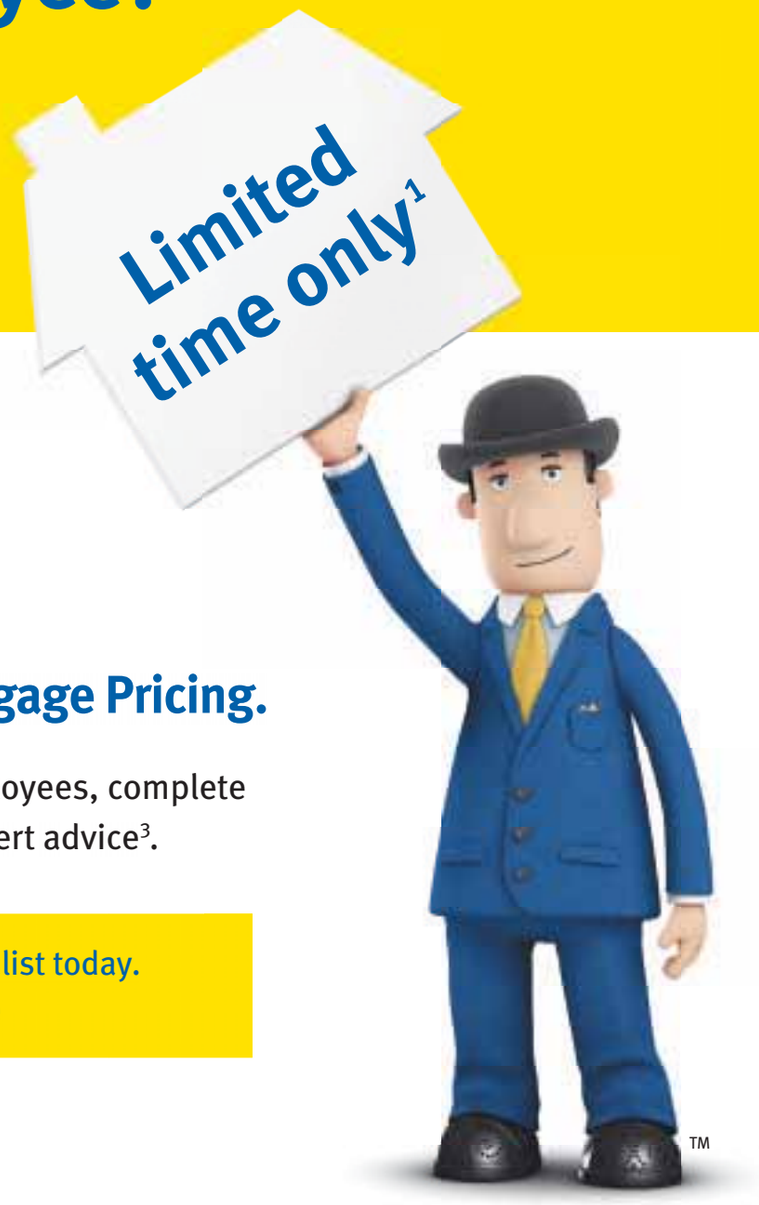

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STERLING/ SILVER
NBA COMMISSIONER BANS L.A. CLIPPERS OWNER FOR LIFE
PAGE 9

Injection sites prick you the wrong way?
Old East Village begins survey to gauge opinions on variety of safety issues PAGE 3

Mission to Mars
Part 1 of our feature on the expedition to the Red Planet explores how we'll get there PAGES 6 & 7

A very valuable Stone
Actress thrives no matter the role, including Spider-Man. Use Metro AR for more. PAGE 12

NEWS WORTH SHARING.

Axe looms over Lorne Ave. school

East London. City and school board at odds over school proposals

A deal to secure the future of Lorne Avenue Public School is in jeopardy, with the school board and the city blaming each other for the problem.

The parties have been negotiating a deal that would see the city take over part of the east London school in a plan to keep the doors open.

The deadline to have an agreement in place is midnight on Wednesday, a date set at a school board meeting in November. Without a deal, the school closes on June 30 with no further discussion.

Mayor Joe Fontana said Tuesday the Thames Valley District School Board has insisted on costs that make a deal "untenable." The school board, meanwhile, says the city's to blame for the lack of an agreement.

"In the offer submitted to TVDSB on March 20, the city deleted key conditions that would guarantee suitable uses of surplus space," said school board chair Ruth Tisdale.

Those conditions were about safety of pupils and fiscal responsibility, she said.

"If a school is to remain functioning in a portion of the building, the remainder must be used by a business or organization that is suitable for children," Tisdale said, stressing that, even if the school closes, work will continue to find another use for it.

Fontana is "not pleased" with the outcome. "We made a formal offer to buy the surplus portion of the building," he said, calling the renovation costs "astronomical."

The Save Lorne Ave group says the school board's initial projection of $5 million became $6 million, then "three times that amount."

"We agreed to open a family centre. We sought out community partners to assist us and locate there but, in the end, the ever-increasing costs required by the board made a deal untenable," Fontana said.

But Save Lorne Ave members are vowing to fight on, with member Scott Maclean saying he was "frustrated" by the process and the lack of cooperation between public agencies, though he praised the city for "working really hard."

Sarah Merritt, another member of the group, accused the school board of "trying to throw the mayor and the city under the bus," while member Frank Filice called for a review of the whole process.

MIKE DONACHIE/METRO

At a glance

- There are 270 students enrolled at Lorne Avenue Public School. It has a capacity of 880.
- The school board says it will save $7 million in 10 years by closing the school.
- If it closes in June, its students will move to St. George's and Bishop Townshend public schools.
- A $3.75 million expansion and program enhancement is planned for Bishop Townshend.

A plan that would keep Lorne Avenue Public School in east London open has crumbled.
ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

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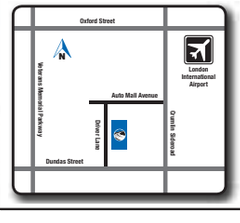

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Racing into warm welcoming waters like these at Grand Bend will likely have to wait a bit longer than usual this year, Environment Canada says. METRO FILE

Area beaches get the cold shoulder

Chilly waters. Great Lakes' spring, summer warm-up behind schedule

SCOTT TAYLOR
scott.taylor@metronews.ca

It may be a case of whistling past the graveyard, but those who make their living off sunny summers at area beaches still believe the season can be saved.

Carol Gates, co-owner of popular eatery G.T.'s in Port Stanley, admitted that cold temperatures will make for a sluggish start to the season. But, she's optimistic.

"Last summer was cold and wet, and the winter was pretty bad," she said, "so we think that any sunny days this summer will get a lot of people down here to enjoy it."

The expectation is for Lake Erie to warm up enough for swimming by early June, she added.

Kettle Creek Inn owner Jean Vedova is slightly more optimistic. She's holding out hope for swimming in time for the May 19 start of Victoria Day weekend.

"Oh, heck, I think it's going to be nice," she said. "Maybe it won't be a jump into summer, but it'll be one of those nice springs we used to get with temperatures in the low 20s."

Environment Canada's Peter Kimbell isn't so sure.

Lake Erie is the shallowest of the Great Lakes, so it's the warmest, but the water temperature is still about 6 C near Port Stanley. That's a few degrees colder than normal for this time of the year.

"It'll continue to warm up quite fast," he said, "but how soon people will be able to swim I can't tell you."

With a long-term forecast of continued below-normal temperatures, the outlook is grim — no more so than in Grand Bend, where the water temperature of Lake Huron is just 3.5 C, about three to four celsius colder than the average for late April.

"If people are used to swimming on the May long weekend, it stands to reason it may be a couple of weeks later than that this year," Kimbell said.

At a glance

- Lake Erie surface water temperature near Port Stanley: About 6 C.
- Lake Huron surface water temperature near Grand Bend: About 3.5 C.

Western students take on binge drinking

An event organized by two Western University students will thumb its nose at a dangerous fad while raising money for a deserving organization.

Katie Bowen, 23, and 25-year-old Anna Devorah Goorvich are behind Raise the Bar, a Thursday event designed to raise awareness about the dangers of the binge-drinking game/social-media trend Neknominations.

Participants film themselves binge-drinking while engaged in risky activities. They post the videos online and then nominate two friends to do something even more dangerous.

It's believed the activity has resulted in fatalities around the world.

The fundraiser will benefit Mission Services' Rotholme Women's and Family Shelter.

"It was startling that our social-media feeds were just full of these videos," Bowen said.

"I'm in the nursing program and even people in my program are doing it. That's bizarre coming from the health promotion aspect."

They chose Rotholme because it helps many women and, closer to home, Bowen has a child herself.

"I was very lucky to have what I had at the time he was born," she said. "It's hard to know there are people out there who don't have that support."

The event starts at 8 p.m. at Jim Bob Ray's (585 Richmond St.). Tickets are $10 at the door.

There will be a silent auction, door prizes and signature cocktails. Donations of food and clothes will also be accepted.

SCOTT TAYLOR/METRO

Research

Study 'underscores prevalence' of domestic abuse, official says

It's one of the most glaring statistics of domestic abuse. One-quarter of all Canadians have tried to help a friend leave an abusive relationship.

That's 25 per cent of everyone in Canada.

A new study from the Canadian Women's Foundation illustrates how prevalent violence against women is in our society.

Canadians are most likely to turn to a friend first to report situations of verbal and emotional abuse, the study says.

"The fact that a quarter of Canadians have tried to help a friend leave an abusive partner underscores the prevalence of violence in this country," said Canadian Women's Foundation director of violence prevention Anuradha Dugal.

Many victims also worry that friends, family, doctors and police won't believe them.

"Abuse is not love and it should not be tolerated — regardless of whether it is one incident, or several," said London police Const. Ken Steeves. "We encourage anyone in an unhealthy relationship to seek assistance, whether it be from a friend or family member, a professional, or the police."

London Abused Women's Centre executive director Megan Walker said the word is getting out to many women that there are ways out and people there to help.

"The study results show that public awareness campaigns like Shine the Light on Woman Abuse and Neighbours Friends and Families are having an impact on abused women," she said.

In Ontario, 29 per cent of residents have tried to help a friend leave an abusive partner. Saskatchewan and Ontario residents (both 68 per cent) have the least confidence that the police or other authorities would believe them if they reported abuse.

The Canadian Women's Foundation's 10th Annual Campaign to End Violence against Women, ending May 11, raises awareness and funds for women who have experienced abuse.

SCOTT TAYLOR/METRO

Survey asks Old East Village for its opinion on needles

Safety task force. Community group reaches the public-participation stage of its area-safety project

MIKE DONACHIE
mike.donachie@metronews.ca

Tough questions are being asked in Old East Village as the area's safety task force nears the end of its work.

The community group, formed at the behest of city council and charged with finding ways to make the area safer, has been running since November. Now it's reaching out with a questionnaire and asking people for their priorities on possible safety measures. Two of the questions address a controversial subject: needles.

People are being asked their opinion on the need to improve needle collection in OEV and their input on whether there's a need for "OEV to champion a citywide feasibility study on a supervised injection site in London."

The drugs questions come under the heading "programs and services," but the questionnaire covers a variety of topics including transportation, the economy and community engagement.

All the ideas have come from the community, said Trevor Johnson, who works with the city's neighbourhood services and has been supporting the task force.

"At the end of the day, it's going to be something that I think the residents are going to be proud of," he said. "It's something that they can take ownership of.

"It's their document, not something that someone has imposed on them."

Have your say

The survey can be found at surveymonkey.com/s/SafeOEV and on paper at the Boyle Community Centre, 530 Charlotte Ave.

- It must be completed by Monday, and findings will form part of a report going to city council in June.

Life in the village: The scene in Old East Village on Tuesday. MIKE DONACHIE/METRO

Liberals' pension payroll deduction plan is a job killer, Conservatives say

"Kathleen Wynne was warned by her finance officials that payroll tax increases are going to cost jobs," Tim Hudak said Tuesday. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

By pushing ahead with an Ontario pension plan, Premier Kathleen Wynne is ignoring warnings from her own finance officials that adding new payroll taxes will kill jobs, the Progressive Conservatives charged Tuesday.

They said the evidence can be found in a government document dated from last February that explores the economic impact of various so-called "revenue tools" to pay for a massive expansion of public transit in the Toronto-Hamilton area.

Any increase in payroll taxes would have the "largest negative impact" on employment, the document said.

It would result in lower business investment, relocation of business to other jurisdictions, reduced work effort and "out-migration of people" over the long term, it said. It also estimates that raising $2 billion annually over 10 years by increasing payroll taxes for transit would cost 18,000 jobs.

The governing Liberals should take the advice to heart as they prepare to launch a provincial pension plan in Thursday's budget, the Tories said.

The Ontario Retirement Pension Plan will increase payroll taxes, which means employers won't have the money to hire more people and workers will have less take-home pay, said Tory finance critic Vic Fedeli.

"This isn't government money going in to pay for this program," he said.

Wynne dismissed the document, saying it has nothing to do with the proposed pension plan. Contributions to a pension plan aren't taxes, either, because they don't go into the provincial treasury, she said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

By the numbers

40%

The number of Ontarians with no pension and relying on CPP benefits.

SOURCE: LIBERAL GOVERNMENT

Harvey Filger. Economic development chief resigning from London City Hall

One of the most influential people at city hall has resigning.

Sources confirmed Tuesday that Harvey Filger, who as director of corporate investments and partnerships has brought hundreds of millions of dollars worth of economic development to London, has said he is resigning, effective May 9.

No reason for the departure has been disclosed, but it comes at a difficult time for the city and its biggest projects.

Filger is expected to leave his job just five days before a big-ticket project returns to committee. The proposed $165-million performing arts centre, which Filger helped to broker, is due to come before councillors on May 14.

With a strong focus on the business world, Filger's been credited with helping London do business worth more than $750 million.

He was also involved in pushing the medical innovation and commercialization network, which is expected to inject $300 million into the local economy, and he was heavily involved in the industrial land strategy that's designed to bring in new employers.

"I think it's going to be a loss for the city," said Coun. Joe Swan, who as chair of the investment and economic prosperity committee has worked closely with Filger. "Harvey had two great things: a real sense of entrepreneurship and a great Rolodex."

And Filger, with his focus on the business world, did seem to feel there was a "culture clash" with the way government works, Swan added.

"They work at a different pace," he said.

MIKE DONACHIE/METRO

Quoted

"He also kept council focused on the needs of people looking for work."

Coun. Joe Swan, talking about Harvey Filger, the city's director of corporate investments and partnerships.

Costly drugs. Ailing girl running out of money, patience with province

A 12-year-old girl with a rare disease scolded the Ontario government on Tuesday for the slow pace of its efforts to lower the price of a life-saving drug she relies on that costs $349,000 a year.

"I am very frustrated," said Madi Vanstone from Beeton, north of Toronto. "I don't know what to say to make them listen."

Madi relies on Kalydeco to treat a rare form of cystic fibrosis but is running out of money raised by friends and family and may soon lose critical insurance coverage.

Premier Kathleen Wynne promised Madi during a meeting last month that she would expedite a joint effort by the provinces to deal with the American manufacturer of Kalydeco to try to lower the price so it can be covered by medicare.

Alberta, which is leading the talks on Kalydeco, made three proposals to drug maker Vertex, but the company rejected each one.

Madi returned to the Ontario legislature Tuesday to say things are taking too long and little is being done.

Madi Vanstone TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

"They're not moving forward, and we can't wait," she said. "There's no time, and they're not doing anything."

PC house leader Jim Wilson made an impassioned plea in the legislature to get assurances for those who need Kalydeco that it will eventually be covered by provincial health insurance.

Wynne told the legislature that Ontario cannot act alone and must work with the other provinces.

"We need that deal," Wynne acknowledged. "We are pushing very hard."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Children's Mental Health. Craft show kicks off week

Artisans are teaming up in London to raise awareness of mental-health issues among young people.

A community arts and crafts sale and show is being planned for 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday at Edgar & Joe's Café in the Goodwill Industries building at 255 Horton St. The event marks the start of Children's Mental Health Week and will include a children's activity area. Admission is free.

The aim is to fight the stigma associated with mental-health issues and spread the word that help is available.

About 50 artisans, crafters and vendors will be involved.

MIKE DONACHIE/METRO

Police department

Drop off drugs, docs, electronics

Woodstock Police Service is teaming up with other agencies for a prescription drop-off day on May 10.

People can bring unused and expired prescription drugs to the police department from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

At the same time, Oxford Crime Stoppers will be on hand to shred and dispose of personal documents. The cost is $5 per box. For another $5, people can recycle unwanted electronics.

All proceeds benefit Crime Stoppers. METRO

Brain tumours

Spring Sprint raises $180,000

London's Spring Sprint raised $180,565 on Saturday, proceeds that will benefit the Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada.

The Foundation supports research, patients and their families.

The sprint brought together 1,000 at Springbank Gardens in the first of 19 events across Canada.

People can still contribute. The Virtual Spring Sprint program allows people who don't live near a run to make a donation.

METRO

Kyle Blois, right, who appears in Terry's Car Gets Stolen, has a little fun with screenwriter James Roberts. METRO FILE

High hopes for local movie come summer

Terry's Car Gets Stolen. Filmmaker seeks cult following, international release

MIKE DONACHIE
mike.donachie@metronews.ca

It's going to be a great summer for Daniel Turres, director of one of the weirdest things to ever come out of London.

He's part of the crew for Terry's Car Gets Stolen, a rollicking tale of violence and larceny that was filmed in the Forest City last year. It's a comedy-drama that focuses on the unfortunate Terry, who's experiencing the worst day of his life.

"Post-production is taking place here in Toronto," said Turres, who moved there from London to attend film school. "I've had people doing the audio and editing here. We're making lots of progress, getting ready for release this summer."

That release is likely to happen in July or August but, as is the case with many independent moviemakers, Turres is seeking a distributor.

He's also working hard on getting his creation noticed on the festival circuit and is planning to show it in London when it's complete.

"The experience for me has been ... constantly hoping that it will get done and trying to get everybody on track," Turres said. "But when things started coming together, it's such a relief to see that it's finally being made."

Unsurprisingly, it's been a great learning experience.

"My hope is that the movie goes national and hopefully international," Turres said.

"Hopefully we'll get a cult following and build a name for future projects in Canada."

London locations

If you see Terry's Car Gets Stolen, look out for lots of downtown locations, including Dundas Street.

- The crew is especially grateful to Norma Jean's, the bar at Huron Street and Highbury Avenue, for letting them film there.
- Catch the film's trailer at metronews.ca.

Emma Donoghue CONTRIBUTED

London to hear live Frog Music

Award-winning author Emma Donoghue will show London her newest work with a personal touch.

Donoghue, who lives in the city, will be at the Central Library's Wolf Performance Hall at 7 p.m. Tuesday for a reading of her novel Frog Music.

The event is part of the Friends of the London Public Library's Speaking with Friends lecture series.

Frog Music focuses on the 1876 murder of a cross-dressing female frog catcher named Jenny Bonnet, 27 — shot in a saloon on the outskirts of San Francisco.

In her work, Donoghue brings a bit of fiction into the mix and suggests a possible solution to the mystery.

The novel is Donoghue's first since her bestseller Room, published in 2010.

The reading is free, with donations accepted for the library's children and youth literacy programs.

A reception and book signing will follow. METRO

Singer Chantal Kreviazuk plays to the crowd during Tuesday's Breakfast of Champions at the London Convention Centre. SCOTT TAYLOR/METRO

Kreviazuk sings her heart out for mental illness cause

Breakfast of Champions. It raises awareness, money

SCOTT TAYLOR
scott.taylor@metronews.ca

She could've just shown up, sang a few songs and offered a few bon mots about mental illness before stepping back into her life as an award-winning singer and musician.

Instead, Chantal Kreviazuk took the time to bond with her sold-out audience of 1,200 at the eighth annual Breakfast of Champions at the London Convention Centre on Tuesday.

Presented in partnership by St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation and the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), proceeds from the event go towards projects like the Mental Health Engagement Network, an initiative that's helping people with a mental illness connect to accessible care anywhere and at any time.

Quoted

"Mental illness is the orphan of the community."

Chantal Kreviazuk, singer

Kreviazuk spoke about a friend who suffered from schizophrenia and a sibling who has also been affected by mental illness.

"Knowing that people are talking about mental health now is so healing because what you come to realize is that so many people have someone they care about in their life ... that suffers with some kind of a mood disorder," she said.

Other physical diseases, such as breast cancer, have become "sexy" for people to support, she added, but mental disorders are still not understood as health issues.

"Yet here we are maybe with a pathway deficiency that has led to anxiety, depression and then to addictions and what have you," she said.

"Gosh, that could be an anatomic or a genetic injury to the brain. That's like any other part of the body."

St. Joseph's Health Care Foundation CEO Michelle Campbell said the breakfast was a huge success on a number of fronts.

"We sold it out about a month ago, and we actually had a lengthy waiting list," she said.

"That tells us there's enormous interest in the community for the subject of mental illness."

Fundraiser to lift up laughs and literacy

Raising a smile and raising some money are the aims of an entertaining event to take place on Friday.

Laughs For Literacy will help kids in London with reading and writing — and by extension, self-confidence and life opportunities, said staff at the non-profit London Urban Services Organization, which is leading the event.

It's being done with help from London's own improv group, Shut The Front Door, and promises hilarity for a good cause, with the proceeds supporting LUSO programs including tutoring.

"Laughs for Literacy is such a fun, lighthearted event that helps us raise much-needed funds to support a variety of literacy programs that LUSO offers to help families reach their full potential," said Elisabete Rodrigues, executive director.

The event is at the Polish Combatants Hall at 80 Ann St.

A preview of items available in the fundraising auction begins at 6:30 p.m.

The buffet dinner starts at 7 p.m., followed by the comedy show at 8 p.m.

Tickets can be bought in advance for $40, by calling 519-452-1466, or at the door for $50.

MIKE DONACHIE/METRO

St. Joseph's to hold Hike for Hospice event

St. Joseph's Hospice is asking people to lace up and hit the trails.

Sunday's Hike for Hospice is the first event to raise money for the organization since its residential facility opened earlier this year.

The hike will take people through Kilally Meadow Trails, which is near the hospice's Windermere Road building.

Money raised during the walk will go toward a variety of programs, such as bereavement programs for teens, and for ongoing costs associated with the residential service.

Donations are needed to cover more than 40 per cent of the hospice's operating costs.

To register or to make a pledge, visit sjhospicelondon.com or call 519-931-3463. METRO

Fundraiser

Money raised will go toward bereavement programs for teens and costs associated with the residential service.

A BRAVE NEW EARTH

Why go to Mars? Futurists say the better question is: Why not?

ROBSON FLETCHER
robson.fletcher@metronews.ca

Peering into the coming decades, Glen Hiemstra has little doubt that humans will one day walk on Mars.

"It's a question of inevitability more than a question of feasibility," the Seattle-based author, consultant and founder of Futurist.com told Metro. "We will eventually go there."

While Hiemstra described the goal of the Mars One project to land settlers on the Red Planet in 2025 as "very ambitious," he also believes the timeline isn't all that far off.

"In my opinion, optimistically, it's the 2030s, not the 2020s," he said. "Realistically, it's probably the 2040s, 2050s before we've really assembled everything that we need."

Len Rosen, the Toronto-based author of 21st Century Tech Blog, foresees a similar timeframe for humanity's first footprints on Martian soil.

"The most optimistic people think in the 2030s — somewhere in that decade," said the 65-year-old Rosen. "I'm hoping I'll be alive to see it."

Questions of *how* aside, both Rosen and Hiemstra had similar answers when asked the bigger question: Why should we go to Mars?

Neither thought it likely that, in the immediate future at least, humans would need another planet to escape some calamity on Earth. Rather, they said, it's more a matter of satisfying our natural desire to explore.

"Curiosity is a huge part of our human nature," Rosen said. "Why do you climb a mountain to the top? You're not doing it because you feel you need to find something at the top of the mountain, other than the satisfaction."

Hiemstra said there is a certain "lifeboat aspect to settling somewhere else," adding that humanity will need another planet at some point in the distant, distant future, but for now that's not the main driver to send people to Mars.

"I think it's really driven more by the exploratory impulse," he said.

That impulse has been behind many past human achievements, Rosen noted.

"What drove us to learn how to build aircraft?" he said. "At the time, I don't think anybody thought we needed to do it, but we did it. And now, what would be our world without air transport?"

WELCOME THE RED PL

A human expedition to Mars is proposed within the next 15 years. Over the next three days, Metro will take you on a pre-flight trip to show you how we'll get there, who might be first to go, and what it might be like when they arrive in this new frontier.

Spacecraft propulsion *of the past, present and future ...*

Faster and faster. The roughly seven-month trip to Mars is seen as one of the major challenges in sending people to the Red Planet.

Such a long journey will take a toll on astronauts, both in terms of exposure to high levels of space radiation and the long-term effects of microgravity on the human body. But scientists are researching all sorts of different ways to speed up spacecraft and cut down on the travel time. Here are some of the propulsion methods being considered:

Liquid-fuelled rockets

This is the type of propulsion that has been sending rockets off of the Earth's surface since the 1950s. It remains the most feasible and readily available method of powering spacecraft, although the challenge for interplanetary travel (rather than just putting craft in orbit) is that it requires both fuel and oxygen — and that can become burdensome to carry, as oxygen accounts for most of the mass in typical propellant combinations.

Ion/plasma thrusters

This approach to propulsion uses electric forces to hurl tiny charged particles at high speeds. Many satellites already use this technology to help stabilize their orbits. These thrusters have been eyed for extremely long-distance space travel, as they can provide small but continuous acceleration for months, even years. But a former NASA astronaut is working on a "Variable Specific Impulse Magnetoplasma Rocket" (VASIMR) he believes could one day reach Mars in just 40 days.

Nuclear fission

Splitting atoms to derive energy is an attractive option because a tiny amount of nuclear fuel can deliver an enormous amount of propulsion. The main challenge lies in safely controlling the fission reaction, as you don't want a meltdown in space. Nevertheless, NASA is working on a "Fission Fragment Rocket Engine" that it believes could provide "significant thrust" using "small amounts of readily available, energy dense, long-lasting fuel."

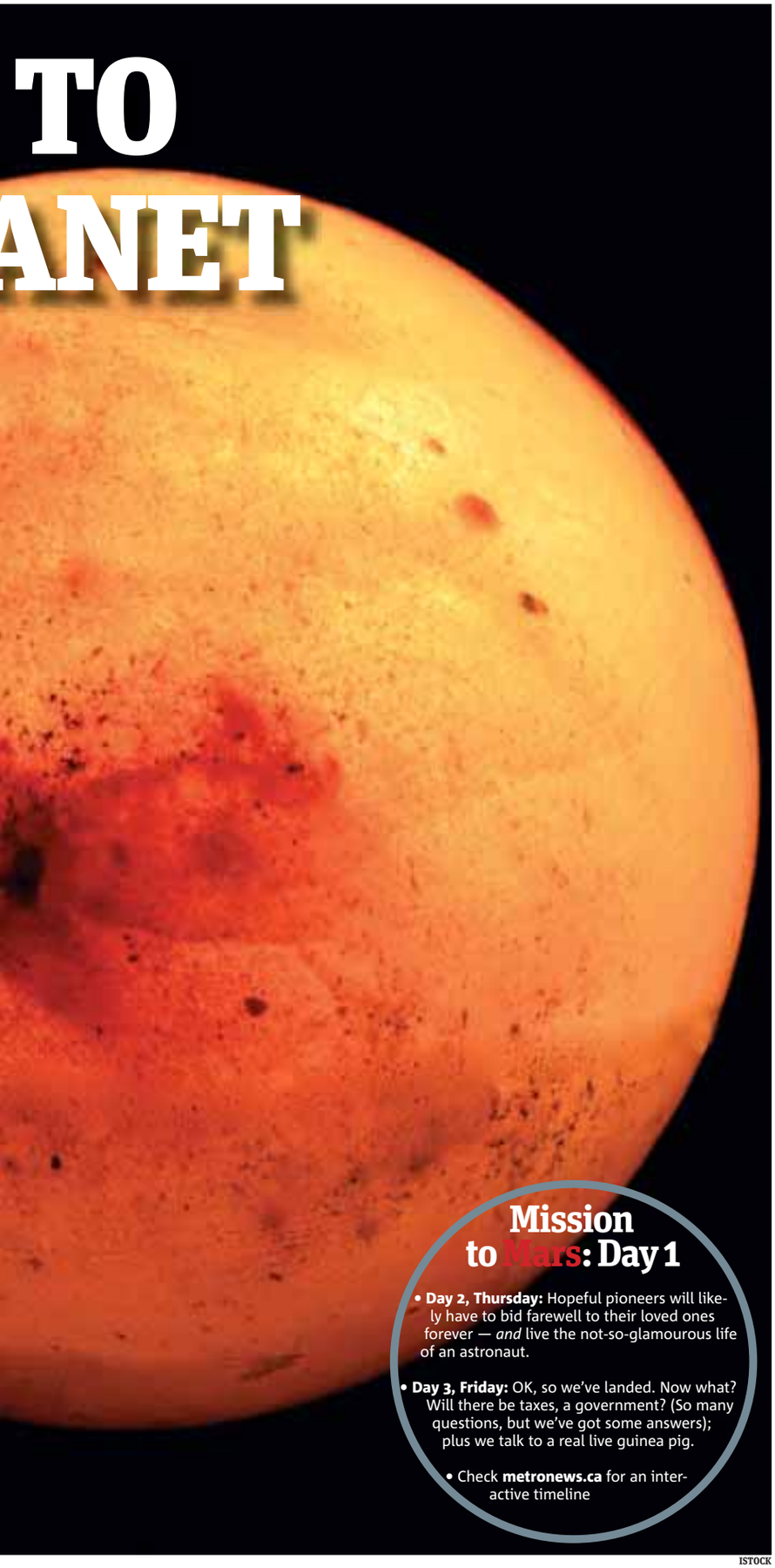
Nuclear fusion

This process involves the smashing of atoms together rather than splitting them apart, but it is similarly attractive because it harnesses massive amounts of energy from small amounts of fuel. A deuterium-tritium fuel pellet the size of a grain of sand could deliver as much propulsion as a gallon of liquid rocket fuel from a "Fusion Drive Rocket" under development by NASA and the University of Washington.

Antimatter engine

Antimatter engines are largely the stuff of science fiction, but the NASA Institute for Advanced Concepts is funding a team of researchers who are looking into the possibility of such technology. The idea is to collide matter with antimatter, resulting in a complete annihilation of mass, all of which is converted to energy. As NASA writes on its website: "While tons of chemical fuel are needed to propel a human mission to Mars, just tens of milligrams of antimatter will do."

TO ANET



Mission to Mars: Day 1

- **Day 2, Thursday:** Hopeful pioneers will likely have to bid farewell to their loved ones forever — *and* live the not-so-glamourous life of an astronaut.
- **Day 3, Friday:** OK, so we've landed. Now what? Will there be taxes, a government? (So many questions, but we've got some answers); plus we talk to a real live guinea pig.
- Check **metronews.ca** for an interactive timeline

ISTOCK

Success rate climbing with successive missions

Historically, more missions to Mars have failed than succeeded, but the success rate is climbing as technology improves and new missions build on the lessons of previous ones.

NASA has seen a string of recent successes, from the Spirit and Opportunity rovers in 2003, to the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter in 2007, to the famous Curiosity rover that landed in 2012 and has been sending back high-definition imagery ever since.

NASA's next major mission, named InSight, is set to launch in March 2016 with the goal of landing a robotic drill on the Red Planet that will probe five metres into Martian soil.

Catherine Johnson, a professor of planetary geophysics at the University of British Columbia, is part of the team working on the robot. She said the tricky task of safely placing a delicate lander on the surface of Mars is becoming easier in one sense, but harder in another.

"One of the things that is becoming more and more challenging, in a good way, is that we have more and more information about the surface of Mars now, at higher and higher resolution," she said.

"So our criteria for what is a safe landing site gets stricter and stricter."

But even with a perfectly calculated trajectory and an ideal location to land, Johnson said there's one curveball Mars can still throw at you: the weather.

"A planet with an atmosphere, even if it's only a thin atmosphere like on Mars, that atmosphere can be quite variable," she said.

"You never know exactly what's going to be happening the day you land."

ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO

Success and failures

In an "historical log" of 41 missions (not all of them landing missions) undertaken by various countries since 1960, NASA counts:

- **23** as having failed
- **16** as having succeeded
- **2** as "success/failure" for partially achieving their goals

An artist's conception of the stationary NASA Mars lander known as InSight, set to launch in March 2016 with the goal of drilling into the interior of Mars.
COURTESY NASA/JPL-CALTECH

Journey to Mars

Hundreds of millions of kilometres on a slingshot trip around the sun

A depiction of how a spacecraft would go from Earth to Mars using a Hohmann transfer orbit.
IMAGE COURTESY GEORGIA TECH SATELLITE COMMUNICATIONS AND NAVIGATION COURSE

The trip to Mars is a long one.

Next to Venus, the Red Planet is the second closest to Earth, but the direct distance from here to there is still measured in the tens of millions — sometimes hundreds of millions — of kilometres.

That's because as Earth and Mars each make their way around the sun, the distance between the two terrestrial planets varies widely.

At its closest, Mars can be about 55 million kilometres away. At its furthest, it's more than 400 million kilometres away. Earth has the inside track around the sun, orbiting every 365 days, while the Mars year is longer — roughly 687 days.

The difference between their orbital periods means that Earth "laps" Mars about once every 26 months.

These moments present an ideal launch window for spacecraft, although even then the journey is not a direct A-to-B path.

A typical trip to Mars follows what's called a "Hohmann transfer orbit," in which a spacecraft leaves Earth on one side of the sun, slingshots around the sun, and meets up with Mars on the far side of the sun from where it began. The entire journey spans hundreds of millions of kilometres and takes about seven months.

This is the route that Mars One plans to use.

According to its ambitious schedule, the non-profit foundation aims to launch unmanned spacecraft carrying equipment and robots to the Red Planet in 2018, 2020, and 2022, and then send the first crew of human settlers — on a one-way trip — in 2024. ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO

Who on earth would take a one-way trip to Mars? Find out in Day 2 of Mission to Mars

Deadly tornadoes ravage the Deep South as death toll rises

Southern U.S. The storm system is the latest onslaught of severe weather after a tornado devastated Little Rock, Ark., Sunday

A dangerous storm system that spawned a chain of deadly tornadoes over three days flattened homes and businesses, forced frightened residents in more than half a dozen states to take cover and left tens of thousands in the dark Tuesday.

As the storm hopscotched across a large swath of the U.S., the overall death toll was more than 30, killed Monday and Sunday in a band stretching from Oklahoma to Alabama.

Some awoke Tuesday to find their loved ones missing and their homes pulverized. In Louisville, firefighters picked through the remains of mobile homes, and 20 of them linked hands to wade through debris. Rescue workers stepped over downed power lines and broken trees.

With water and roof damage, the small local hospital's emergency room was evacuated Monday.

"We thought we were going to be OK, then a guy came in and said, 'It's here right now,'" said Dr. Michael Henry, head of the ER. "Then boom! It blew through."

Just east of the hospital, a woman died at the daycare centre she'd run for seven years, according to the county coroner. One seriously injured child was evacuated from the centre, said state Rep. Michael Evans, D-Louisville, who is acting as a liaison for the county.

"You see this in movies," said Abby Tucker, 27. "You don't see it in your own backyard."

The storm system is the latest onslaught of severe weather a day after a tornado carved an 80-mile path of destruction through Little Rock, Ark., killing at least 15. Severe storms also killed one person each in Oklahoma and Iowa on Sunday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dan Wassman gets a hug from a friend, Amy Lundsford, at the home site of his son, also named Dan, who was killed when a tornado destroyed his home late Sunday afternoon in Vilonia, Ark. Tornadoes ripped through the region April 27, leaving many dead. MARK WILSON/GETTY IMAGES

Italian Judge says Knox delivered 'mortal blow'

In this 2011 file photo, Amanda Knox gestures during a press conference in Seattle. TED S. WARREN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Italian appeals court that reinstated the conviction against Amanda Knox in her British roommate's 2007 murder said in a lengthy reasoning made public Tuesday that Knox herself delivered the fatal blow out of a desire to "overpower and humiliate" the victim.

Presiding Judge Alessandro Nencini concluded in a 337-page document that the evidence "inevitably leads to the upholding of the criminal responsibility" against Knox and her former Italian boyfriend Raffaele Sollecito for the murder of 21-year-old Meredith Kercher in a hillside villa occupied by students in the university town of Perugia.

The judge said the nature of Kercher's wounds, which he said were inflicted by two knives, and the absence of defensive wounds indicated multiple aggressors were to blame, also including Rudy Hermann Guede, an Ivorian man convicted separately and serving a 16-year sentence.

Nencini presided over the Florence-based panel that reinstated the first trial guilty verdicts against Knox and Sollecito in January, handing Knox a 28 and a half year sentence including the additional conviction on a slander charge for wrongly accusing a Congolese bar owner. Sollecito faces 25 years.

The release of the court's reasoning opens the verdict to an appeal back to the supreme Court of Cassation.

The University of Washington student has been in the United States since 2011, when her earlier conviction was overturned. Knox, 26, has vowed to fight the reinstated conviction, saying she would "never go willingly" to Italy to face her judicial fate. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The decision

Nencini's reasoning assigned the role of each assailant.

- Sollecito, now 30, used a small knife that caused a wound on Kercher's neck and also was used to remove her bra, the judge wrote, while Guede restrained and sexually assaulted the victim. Knox "delivered the only mortal blow," with a kitchen knife, the judge wrote.

Mass shooting

Six wounded in FedEx shooting

A FedEx employee wearing ammunition across his chest opened fire Tuesday at a package-sorting centre outside Atlanta, wounding six people, three critically, before committing suicide, police and witnesses said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Botched execution

Death row inmate dies of heart attack

An inmate whose execution was halted because of a botched drug combination died of a heart attack, the head of the Okla. Department of Corrections said. Officials said Clayton Lockett had vein failure during the execution. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Colorado

BYOW: Like BYOB, but with weed

Saying it's bring-your-own-weed, the Colorado Symphony Orchestra will play a series of fundraising concerts sponsored by the state's growing pot industry.

In a statement Tuesday, symphony CEO Jerome Kern says they're part of efforts to reach a broader audience.

Listeners are encouraged to bring their own marijuana to smoke or eat. Smoking will be allowed at the private venues where the first two 21-and-up concerts will be held. Organizers say they will follow the rules at the final show at the publicly owned Red Rocks Amphitheater, where smoking is banned. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mexico City

Thieves stopped by vigilante justice

Mexico City officials said Tuesday an unidentified man disarmed a thief trying to rob passengers aboard a bus, then shot him and another thief to death before fleeing.

The Mexico City officials said the bodies of two men were found at the scene late Monday, as were two pistols — one of them a toy.

Officials quoted witnesses saying the two men were allegedly robbing passengers at gunpoint when a bus rider wrestled a gun away from one thief, shot him and the accomplice. He has since been labelled "the anonymous avenger," or "Vengador Anonimo" in local media. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Banned for life from basketball

Racist rant fallout.
Pressure from owners needed to help force Sterling to sell team

NBA Commissioner Adam Silver.
MARK J. TERRILL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Issuing about the strongest rebuke that he could, NBA Commissioner Adam Silver banned Los Angeles Clippers owner Donald Sterling for life Tuesday for making racist comments in a recorded conversation, the first step toward forcing a sale of the club and permanently removing Sterling from the league.

Silver also fined Sterling $2.5 million US, and again expressed outrage.

"I fully expect to get the support I need from the other NBA owners to remove him," Silver said.

Several owners immediately chimed in with support of Silver's decision. Sterling, the league's longest-tenured owner and someone with an estimated net worth of about $2 billion, did not offer any immediate comment.

The penalties, which were announced only three days after the scandal broke, are the harshest ever issued by the league and among the stiffest punishments ever given to an owner in professional sports. Silver said a league investigation found that Sterling was in fact the person on the audiotapes that were released over the weekend and immediately sent shock waves throughout the game.

"We stand together in condemning Mr. Sterling's views," Silver said. "They simply have no place in the NBA."

Sterling acknowledged he was the man on the tape, Silver said.

Sterling still owns the team, but going forward he is immediately barred from attending any NBA games or practices, being present at any Clippers office or facility, participating in any business or player personnel decisions involving the team or being part of any league business.

It's unclear how Sterling will respond.

After the announcement, the Clippers' website had a simple message: "We are one," it read.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Court of appeal

Khadr's status before court

Former Guantanamo Bay detainee Omar Khadr turns to Alberta's top court Wednesday in hopes of having his eight-year prison term recognized as a youth rather than an adult sentence.

At issue before Alberta's Court of Appeal is whether Correctional Service of Canada has correctly interpreted the sentence handed down by an American military commission in 2010 after Khadr pleaded guilty to five war crimes he committed as a 15-year-old.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Toronto

New terror group

A Canadian organization, the International Relief Fund for the Afflicted and Needy, that provided humanitarian aid to Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza has been formally branded a terrorist group before the start of a court battle over the revocation of its charitable status.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Price tag for jets could soar

A F-35 is seen during the Joint Services Open House and Air Show May 16, 2008 at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland. A new report by two think-tanks says the operating costs of Canada's proposed new stealth fighter could be considerably higher than what the Harper government is acknowledging — or perhaps even expecting. BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI/GETTY IMAGES

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Market Minute

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Natural gas: $4.84 US (+$0.07)
Dow Jones: 16,535.37 (+86.63)

TSX
14,583.11 (+52.20)

OIL
$101.28 US (+$0.44)

GOLD
$1,296.30 US (-$2.70)

West vs. the rest

Go West, young man, for a high GDP

A regional breakdown of economic performance suggests Canada's two economies drifted even further apart in 2013.

Statistics Canada says in a new report issued Tuesday that improvement in economic output last year was heavily slanted toward resource-rich regions. The gap between the West and the rest widened to almost two percentage points.

Saskatchewan, which also benefited from a bump in the agriculture sector, posted a 4.8 per cent surge in gross domestic product in 2013, while oil-rich Alberta realized a 3.9 per cent growth rate. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bitumen

Suncor sets sights on refining Alta. oil in Montreal

A project that would enable Suncor Energy Inc.'s Montreal refinery to process thick, tarry oilsands bitumen from Alberta could get the green light later this year or early in 2015, CEO Steve Williams said Tuesday.

The Montreal coker project is just one way Suncor is looking to cut crude costs at the refinery, which has long relied on pricey overseas imports.

Suncor is not disclosing the estimated pricetag of the coker project, but Williams says it will cost much less to build in Montreal than in Alberta. THE CANADIAN PRESS

How often are telecoms giving data to the feds?

Calls for more. Privacy commissioner pushes for specifics on personal info being given to government

Chantal Bernier
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada's privacy commissioner says telecom companies are refusing to tell her office how many times they have handed over personal customer information to the federal government without a warrant.

Chantal Bernier, the interim privacy commissioner, said her office has repeatedly asked telecom companies to disclose statistics and the scope of warrantless disclosure of data, to no avail.

Bernier said the companies have only provided her office with aggregate data, which shows how many times the telecom industry as a whole gives the government customer information without a warrant.

Bernier said she would like to see specific statistics published about this information.

"It would give a form of oversight by empowering citizens to see what the scope of the phenomenon is." THE CANADIAN PRESS

South of the border

The U.S. Supreme Court seemed wary Tuesday of allowing police unbridled freedom to search cellphones found on people they arrest without first getting a warrant.

- A key question in two cases argued Tuesday is whether Americans' cellphones, with vast quantities of sensitive records, photographs and communications, are a private realm much like their homes.
- The justices suggested they might favour limiting warrantless cellphone searches to looking for evidence of the crime on which an arrest is based. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mercedes-Benz recalls more than 284,000 C-Class cars

A Mercedes C-Class C350 sits on display at the New York International Auto Show in April 2011, in New York City. Mercedes-Benz is recalling more than 284,000 C-Class cars in the U.S. and Canada because the rear lights can fail. The recall affects some C300, C350 and C63 AMG cars from the 2008 through 2011 model years. The problem affects nearly 253,000 cars in the U.S. and another 31,000 in Canada. STORY: THE CANADIAN PRESS; PHOTO: RAMIN TALAIE/GETTY IMAGES

Security. TSA's PreCheck takes flight at Air Canada

The U.S. Transportation Security Administration is expanding its PreCheck expedited screening program to passengers on international airlines.

Air Canada on Tuesday became the first international carrier to participate, with TSA officials saying other foreign airlines would soon sign on. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Report. Rude luxury-shop staff boosts bottom line

If luxury brands want to sell more, they should hire rude sales staff.

That's the finding of a new University of B.C. study that reveals consumers who get the brush-off at high-end retailers are more willing to fork over the big bucks.

THANDI FLETCHER/
METRO IN VANCOUVER

Nokia names new CEO, sets sights on comeback

Incoming CEO of Nokia Rajeev Suri speaks during the press conference where Nokia announced first quarter earnings in Finland Tuesday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nokia is planning for a turnaround now that it has sold its loss-making handset business to Microsoft, naming on Tuesday a new CEO, promising to pay dividends again and laying out its vision for its remaining operations.

For the first quarter — the last for which it will include figures for its cellphones unit — Nokia said its net loss was $173 million US compared with a loss of 272 million a year earlier. Revenue fell to 2.6 billion euros from 3.1 billion euros, with mobile device sales plunging 30 per cent.

To lead the Finnish company in its focus on the remaining businesses of networks, software, and maps, it named Rajeev Suri, the Indian-born former head of Nokia Solutions and Networks, to become CEO on May 1. The 46-year-old, who joined Nokia in 1995, has been largely credited with a turnaround in the company's networks sector.

Nokia Corp.'s shares closed up three per cent at 5.29 euros on the Helsinki Stock Exchange.

Neil Mawston from Strategy Analytics said that a "relief factor" partly explained the increase in the company's share price.

Nokia, which completed the 5.44 billion-euro sale of its troubled devices and services unit and a license to a portfolio of patents to Microsoft Corp. last week, said it plans to invest 5 billion euros to "optimize its capital structure," including paying 1.8 billion euros in dividends for 2013 and 2014. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Positive, so far

Rajeev Suri, set to officially become Nokia's CEO Thursday, gave an upbeat forecast, saying Nokia will continue expansion of its networks business, which serves 90 of the world's 100 largest operators, and focus on its mapping services for car navigation systems, where it has an 80 per cent market share with its HERE maps.

BY GEORGE! AT LAST, A UNION FORGED

JUST SAYIN'

Paul Sullivan
metronews.ca

I'm sure I'm not the only guy who ever wished he could be George Clooney, if only for a day.

A winning combination of intelligence, talent, wit, savoir faire, je ne sais quoi and all those other untranslatable French phrases, George tops it all off with matinee-idol good looks.

Not surprising. He's a matinee idol, duh.

Which is no small distinction. Matinee idols are a dying breed. All the other guys on the cover of GQ look alike and are called Hemsworth. George is the epitome of class at a time when class is 40 per cent off at the outlet mall. Who wouldn't want to be George?

Until now, George was also the world's most eligible bachelor. Apparently — I wouldn't know — that's tough. When the women of the world are throwing themselves at your feet, it can be a challenge, or so I hear. George handled the "too many women problem" by doing his best to date them all. And after a brief matrimonial experiment in the early '90s, he also tried to live with them all, one at a time, for two- to three-year stretches.

A selfless quest, if doomed to failure. There's just not enough George to go around. And, truth be told, at 53, he's not getting any younger. You could see it in Gravity. Sandra Bullock was the undisputed star and George was relegated to supporting role status as the kindly sidekick, sort of Buzz Lightyear with crinkles. Not wrinkles. George will never have wrinkles.

The signs are clear. The man who bet Michelle Pfeiffer $100,000 that he'd never get married again is ready to settle down. All those cocktail waitresses, supermodels and female wrestlers were OK when he was dating the entire female gender, but now he has to pick one.

And so he's focused that formidable charm on the world's smartest and most beautiful woman, who, in case you're wondering, is 36-year-old Amal Alamuddin. It's hard to believe she is just one woman. She tops the list of the 21 Hottest Barristers in London, was educated at Oxford, specializes in international law, speaks three languages, advises the Secretary General of the UN on human rights in Syria, represented ex-Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko and helped Wikileaks founder Julian Assange resist extradition to Sweden.

I imagine it's hard to pull the wool over Ms. Alamuddin's eyes, but when the wolf mounting the charm offensive is George Clooney, what can you do? You sigh, succumb, and go to meet mom. Who, by the way, approves of this prodigious combination of beauty and brains.

Of course, this is real life, not Hollywood. The union of the world's most eligible bachelor and the paragon of global jurisprudence does not, at first blush, look like a recipe for Happily Ever After. Amal better hope George's attempt to mate, er, date the planet is over, and George better hope he doesn't end up before a world tribunal on matrimonial war crimes. Still, today, it's all about congratulations and the triumph of class over crass.

ZOOM

Science experimantis

Newcastle University scientists research vision by outfitting a praying mantis with 3D glasses.
MIKE URWIN/NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

Q&A

"It's a test for their eyesight"

VIVEK NITYANANDA
Research associate at Newcastle University's Institute of Neuroscience

A praying mantis has been outfitted with the world's smallest pair of 3D glasses as part of an experiment to understand the insect's vision. Scientists from Newcastle University used beeswax to affix the five-millimetre-wide shades on the bug's head.

Here's what researcher Vivek Nityanada had to say about the experiment:

What inspired you to put 3D glasses on a bug?
We wanted to find out how three-dimensional vision has evolved. Like humans, praying mantises have 3D vision, or stereopsis. They are the only insects with such sight.

How did your mantis take to its new eyewear?
It tried to take them off at first, but eventually got pretty comfortable with them and went about its usual mantis business.

Do the glasses work?
So far, our results have been mixed. It's promising but we haven't nailed it down yet.

Maybe the insect will prefer the glasses, as a super-enhancement to its vision. (Laughs) It doesn't really change its eyesight for the better; we're just fooling it into misjudging depth. But the glasses do make them seem more sophisticated, and they definitely look weirder than they already are.

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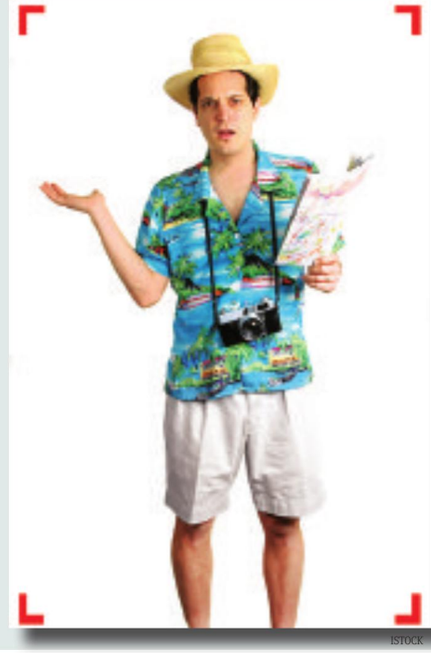
Your money belt can't save you now

ANDREW FIFIELD
metronews.ca

Anybody who has travelled abroad has likely been warned about the skilled pickpockets who are hoping to ply your wares in the world's larger tourist havens.

But as this security footage shot in Thailand shows, keeping your belongings safe is more than just a matter of having your cash strapped to your belly and your belongings always in sight. Because a highly co-ordinated phalanx of thieves, complete with distraction games and carefully constructed props, makes for a formidable enemy.



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See that symbol? It means you can scan the photo below with your Metro News app. Andrew Garfield talks about becoming Peter Parker

Stone shines in every role

From The Help to Spider-Man. Whether the role demands Lucille-Ball-style screwball comedy, fiery rage and indignation or sizzling chemistry, Emma thrives

IN FOCUS
Richard Crouse
scene@metronews.ca

The Spider-Man movies don't skimp on the stuff that puts the "super" into superhero movies. There's web-slinging shenanigans and wild bad guys galore, but The Amazing Spider-Man 2 director Marc Webb calls the relationship between Spidey and girlfriend Gwen Stacy, "the engine of the movie."

The chemistry the real-life couple brings to the screen is undeniable, but it almost didn't get a chance to blossom. Before Stone landed the role of the brainiac love interest, Mia Wasikowska, Imogen Poots, Emma Roberts and even Lindsay Lohan were considered.

Stone won some of the best reviews of her career playing Gwen in The Amazing Spider-Man — Peter Travers said she, "just jumps to life on screen" — in a role that gave her the biggest hit of her career to date.

Smaller roles in Superbad and Zombieland hinted at her ability to be funny and hold the screen, but in 2010's Easy A she turned a corner into full-on Lucille Ball mode, mixing pratfalls with wit while pulling faces and cracking jokes. Smart and funny, she's the film's centrepiece.

The movie begins with the voice over, "The rumours of my promiscuity have been greatly exaggerated." It's the voice of Olive (Stone), a clean-cut high school senior who tells a little white lie about losing her virginity. As soon as the gossip mill gets a hold of the info, however, her life takes a parallel course to the heroine of the book she is studying in English class — The Scarlet Letter.

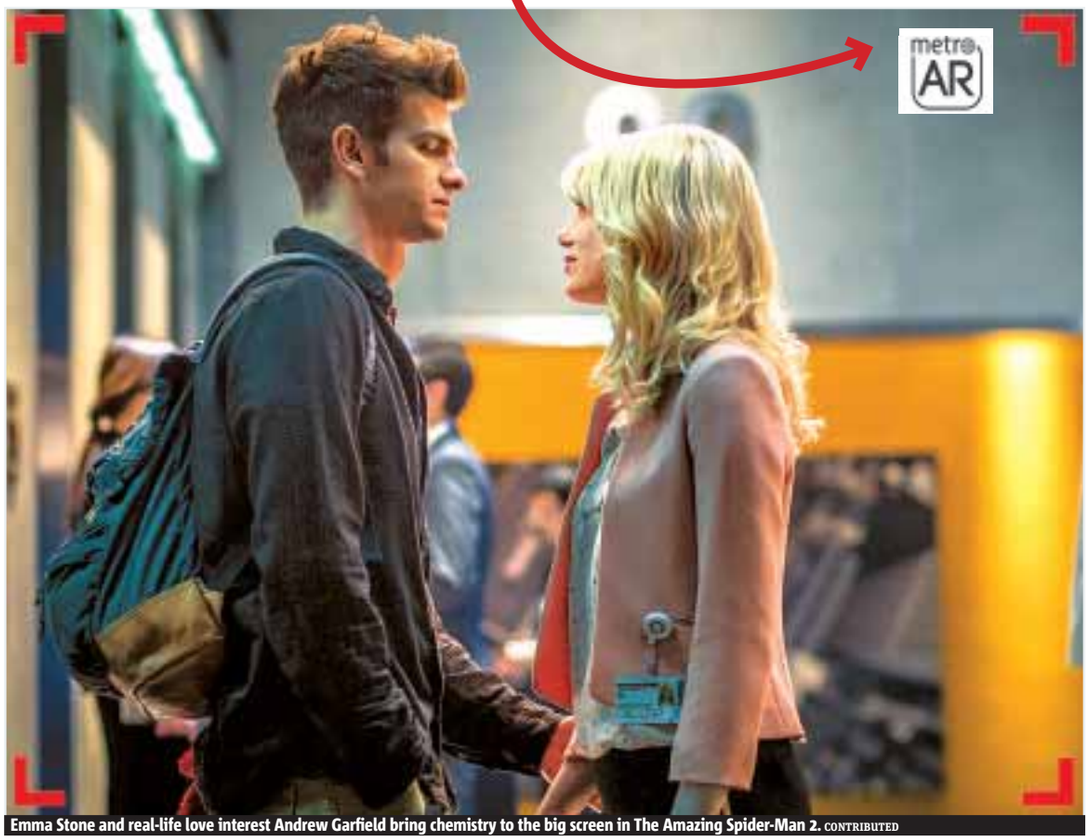
Stone is laugh-out-loud funny in Easy A, but her breakout film was a serious drama.

In The Help, she plays Jackson, Miss. native "Skeeter" Phelan who comes home from four years at school to discover the woman who raised her, a maid named Constantine (Cicely Tyson), is no longer employed by her family. Her mother says she quit, but Skeeter has doubts. With the help of a courageous group of housekeepers she tells the real story of the life of the maids, writing a book called The Help.

The Flick Filosopher called her performance, "on fire with indignation and rage," and she moved from The Help to a variety of roles, including playing a femme fatale in Gangster Squad opposite Ryan Gosling and Josh Brolin, and lending her trademark raspy voice to cave girl Eep in the animated hit The Croods.

The 25-year-old actress is living her childhood dream of being an actress but says if performing hadn't worked out, she would have been a journalist, "because (investigating people's lives is) pretty much what an actor does.

"And imagine getting to interview people like me," she laughs. "It can't get much better than that."



Emma Stone and real-life love interest Andrew Garfield bring chemistry to the big screen in The Amazing Spider-Man 2. CONTRIBUTED

Web slinger

Spider-Man powers get real

Patrick Priebe is the new Spider-Man ... in terms of gadgetry, at least. The German lab technician has created a working web shooter, which fires pellets and a harpoon-tipped, retractable fishing line instead of a liquid web. Far from requiring any actual superpowers, the web-slinging contraption is a battery-run coil gun that is powered through electromagnetism. Metro nets the every-day tech guru — behind the website laser-gadgets.com — for a chat about all things superhero.

The real Spider-Man catches bad guys, so do you use the web shooter to clean the streets of pests?
(Laughs) The only thing that you'll be grappling with is an apple.

Could you switch on the TV with the pellets or fishing line?
That actually might work. You could also grapple magnetic objects with the fishing line. The only problem is that they might shatter on impact.

No beer cans, then. Do you try out any kick-ass movie-style stunts?
I do a lot of sports like hockey, which is dangerous in its own way. But those stunts are way too extreme for me.

The Batman vs. Superman movie is out in the near future. Who's going to win?
Batman is too grumpy; Superman is the best of all heroes; he would kick everyone's ass. He has X-ray vision.

Can you create the Superman-style laser eyes?
I have made laser eyewear. It's like Cyclops from X-Men, and works pretty well. It's very dangerous. That's why I don't show people how to do it on my website.

Any danger of your gadgets causing actual harm?
Well, the web shooter emits 350 volts and can shock you to death!

EDWARD THOMPSON/METRO WORLD NEWS

Patrick Priebe has invented a working web shooter, which fires pellets and a harpoon-tipped, retractable fishing line. CONTRIBUTED

The cast of Star Wars: Episode VII includes up-and-comer Oscar Isaac. GETTY IMAGES FILE

Star Wars: Episode VII Cast finally announced

Star Wars: Episode VII finally has its stars. May the Force be with them.

After months of carefully guarded secrecy and endless Internet speculation, Lucasfilm and Walt Disney Co. unveiled the cast of the latest incarnation of the space epic Tuesday on the official Star Wars website.

Starring in J.J. Abrams' new Star Wars are: John Boyega, Daisy Ridley, Adam Driver, Oscar Isaac, Max von Sydow, Andy Serkis and Domhnall Gleeson.

The companies declined to name the characters each will play, though Driver, the breakout star of HBO's Girls, is widely expected to be playing the film's feature villain.

They join returning Star Wars veterans Harrison Ford, Mark Hamill and Carrie Fisher. Peter Mayhew is also back as Chewbacca and Kenny Baker will reprise R2-D2.

Star Wars: Episode VII, which will be set 30 years after 1983's Return of the Jedi, will be released in December 2015. Disney acquired Lucasfilm in 2012, and immediately put a new Star Wars trilogy into development. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Justice League. Will Matt Damon don green tights for the role of Aquaman?

Rumours have it that Matt Damon could be slated to join his longtime friend Ben Affleck on the set of Zack Snyder's forthcoming superhero movie. That's the buzz on TheWrap.com.

Matt Damon could board Justice League, the feature on the DC Comics superhero team, along the same lines as Marvel's Avengers. The speculation should be regarded as such, however, especially since the character he is thought to play is not even guaranteed to appear in the movie.

Damon may be in line to play Aquaman, king of the underwater city of Atlantis, whose superpowers include telepathy and superhuman strength.

If the rumours are true, Damon will co-star with Ben Affleck and Henry Cavill, who are expected to return as Batman and Superman respectively.

The other persistent rumours surrounding Justice League pertain to its possible release date. While Latino Review thinks the feature will be in theatres on May 5, 2017, the Wall Street Journal indicates that the feature will be released in 2018 at the earliest. AFP

Matt Damon is rumoured to be on board for the upcoming Justice League film. ANNE-CHRISTINE POUJOULAT/ AFP

Online TV

Yahoo unveils original online show content

Yahoo has unveiled original online shows and new advertising options as it continues a long-running attempt to evolve into an Internet venue for premier content.

The offerings will include two comedy programs, a partnership with Live Nation to stream concerts, an online travel magazine, and new advertising capabilities.

Other Space, a science fiction comedy, will centre on a spaceship crew winding up in an alternate universe in the early 22nd century, while Sin City Saints tells the story of a Silicon Valley tycoon who buys a Las Vegas pro basketball team.

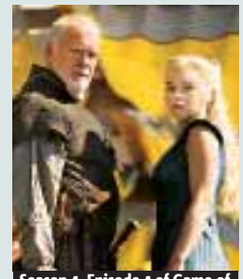
The new shows will launch on Yahoo Screen next year and be viewable on mobile devices, desktop computers or through Apple TV or Roku set-top boxes. AFP

HBO

Game of Thrones sets ratings record

The HBO fantasy series Game of Thrones achieved a new record audience with the fourth episode of its fourth season, entitled Oathkeeper, which aired on Sunday, April 27.

The broadcast was watched by close to seven million viewers at 9 p.m., and the total audience number climbed to 8.4 million when taking into account viewers of rebroadcasts through the night. AFP


Season 4, Episode 4 of Game of Thrones was the most-watched yet. HBO

Finding beauty in being the bad guy

The Sheik.
New documentary tells the story of a man from Tehran who became wrestling's most infamous villain

ADAM NAYMAN
scene@metronews.ca

On Twitter, where he has more than 400,000 followers, The Iron Sheik is exactly the sort of holy terror that he was during his glory days in the wrestling ring. He'll pick a fight with anybody, including Rob Ford.

But in real life, Khosrow Vaziri is a soft-spoken man whose pride in his legendary alter ego's wrestling exploits is tempered by a winning humility.

Both sides of Vaziri's personality are on display in The Sheik, an affectionate yet surprisingly intense documentary about his life in and out of the squared circle. "I was happy that somebody wanted to make a [movie] about me," says the 72-year-old Tehran native, who was a bodyguard for the Shah's family before earning his stripes as both a decorated amateur and boldly infamous professional wrestler. "It was something new for me."

Produced by Vaziri's longtime friends and managers Page and Jian Magen — who turned to crowdsourcing in order to fund the production and plan to distribute it digitally as well as theatrically — and directed by Igal Hecht, The Sheik is a personal profile with a political undertone, In it, Vaziri speaks candidly about exploiting his heritage to become, in his words, "the most hated wrestler in the world."

"Sometimes I had so much heat that people would throw things into the ring," he says with a smile.

"They would have to sneak me to my hotel in an ambulance because people were waiting outside the arena."

And yet despite playing his villainous foreigner role to the hilt, Vaziri was well-liked and respected by his fellow WWE wrestlers, who he says never betrayed any of the same xenophobic attitudes of the fans.

"In the old days, we tried to show the fans that wrestling was real," he explains.

"Good guys would go to one locker room, and bad guys to another. Some guys wouldn't even admit to their wife that it was all 'work.'"

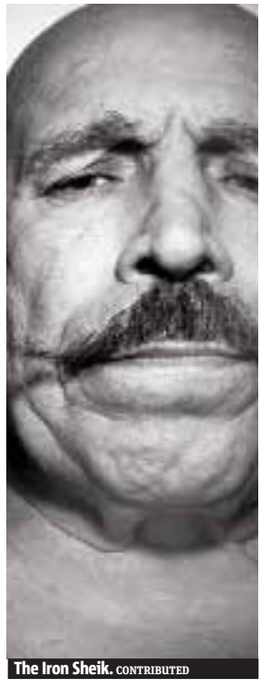
There is material about Vaziri's family and personal life in The Sheik, and not all of it is flattering — he's battled drug addiction since the shocking death of his eldest daughter in 2003 — but he says that he was OK with it being a balanced portrait.

"Some of it was maybe not good for me. My family didn't like some things, but in the end, the story was told."

Quoted

"Some of it was maybe not good for me. My family didn't like some things, but in the end, the story was told."

The Iron Sheik on the new documentary The Sheik.


The Iron Sheik. CONTRIBUTED

The Iron Sheik was a body guard for the Shah's family in his younger years. CONTRIBUTED

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Craig Ferguson

Ferguson gives up late-night spot

In the latest of a series of late-night comedy shake-ups, Craig Ferguson, host of CBS' The Late Late Show since 2005, has announced that he is leaving the show.

This is the most recent domino to fall in the late-night line-up. David Letterman announced his retirement from Ferguson's lead-in, The Late Show, earlier in April. CBS quickly named Stephen Colbert of The Colbert Report as his successor.

The Word

Donald Sterling's girlfriend, V. Stiviano, reads Metro?

THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

V. STIVIANO/INSTAGRAM

After the audio tapes of Clippers' owner Donald Sterling spewing racial slurs hit, his alleged girlfriend and leaker of those tapes, V. Stiviano, made her Instagram account public for the world to see. And if you haven't looked at it, you should. It is truly weird and obnoxious — she overuses hashtags more than a 13-year-old girl.

After some sleuthing, we stumbled upon this shot of her reading a Metro with the caption, "I'm searching for love in the classified section!"

We at Metro want you to know we don't support people like Donald Sterling advertising in our classified section. She must have found him some other way. Maybe racistsugardaddyforme.com?

Kanye West and Kim Kardashian ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Kim and Kanye lockdown their love this week

It is being reported that Kim Kardashian and Kanye West will be wed in a very small, private ceremony with a justice of the peace in Los Angeles this week.

Yes, yes, yes — the lavish Parisian celebration is still taking place, but before that occurs, their lawyers are recommending they be hitched in a civil ceremony to avoid going through an international bureaucratic nightmare. After they say "I do" in court, they will then fly to Paris to plan their wedding.

Get your suits and dresses dry cleaned now — it's reported they will be married on May 24.

See that symbol? It means you can scan the photo below with your Metro News app for more images from North Carolina's Outer Banks

Outer Banks offers different strokes for different folks

More than just a golf destination. Once you've tired of swinging the sticks, there's still plenty more to take in on a trip to North Carolina's rugged coastline

BRIAN KENDALL
canadiangolftraveller.com

Nags Head Golf Links is cruelly exposed to the turbulent waters of the Atlantic and offers a challenging 18-hole game. ALL PHOTOS: CONTRIBUTED/PLAYOBXGOLF.COM

Even for golfers determined to spend every possible moment swinging the sticks, the Outer Banks of North Carolina offer other attractions too essential to ignore.

Foremost among them is the Wright Brothers National Memorial, set on the now hallowed ground near the beach town of Kitty Hawk where Wilbur and Orville Wright launched the first powered air flight in 1903.

A stone pillar marks the precise spot of that epochal liftoff, and the site's prize attraction is a full-scale replica of the Wright Flyer, their first primitive aircraft.

The Wright brothers are credited with making famous this sun-drenched 320-kilometre long chain of barrier islands, just off the coast of North Carolina and a small stretch of Virginia.

Today, the coastline's white sand beaches, lighthouses, oyster houses, quaint shingle-sided inns and outstanding golf courses are year-round attractions — although peak season runs from May through September.

Capricious winds off the turbulent waters offshore, known as the Graveyard of the Atlantic, frequently bedevil golfers at the popular oceanfront courses of OBX, as tourism marketers have branded the Outer Banks.

Most cruelly exposed to the elements is Nags Head Golf Links, a Scottish-style design where several holes play alongside Roanoke Sound. Golf Digest called architect Bob Moore's layout "the longest 6,126 yards you'll ever play."

Another seaside beauty is Currituck Club, a dramatic Rees Jones design that sweeps across 600 acres of dunes, wetlands, maritime forests and sound seascapes.

High seas swept ashore another of the coast's unique attractions. Wild horses, descendants of Spanish mustangs that survived 16th-century shipwrecks, freely roam the dunes of Swan Beach, North Swan Beach and Carova Beach. Jeep tours offered from the nearby town of Corolla provide a close-up look at the tenacious survivors of a herd that once ranged throughout the barrier islands.

A stroll through beauty like this will make you forget the frustration of golf.

Where to stay

Many visitors rent beach houses through local agents. Popular inns include Nags Head Inn and Hilton Garden Inn in Kitty Hawk. But gorgeously remodelled Sanderling Resort, a beachhouse-style property just outside the town of Duck, is especially memorable. Three pools and a wraparound deck overlook an uninterrupted strand of prime Atlantic beachfront.

Nags Head, Kill Devil Hills, Waves, Duck and other quaintly named and picturesque beachfront towns dot a still largely unpretentious and laid-back strand where many houses are built on stilts for protection against the surging tides that accompany the autumn hurricanes.

Visitors will need a car to travel between golf courses and see the sights. It's a long trek to the Outer Banks from even the closest major airports: Norfolk International Airport is about 145 kilometres from centrally located Nags Head; and Raleigh Durham International Airport about 338 kilometres.

Another must-play course is Kilmarlic Golf Club, a Tom Steele mainland design carved through 600 acres of maritime forest and wetlands. Kilmarlic hosted the North Carolina Open in 2004 and 2009.

A more player-friendly option is The Pointe Golf Club, a traditional Russell Breeden-designed layout in rural countryside on the mainland.

Far more demanding is The Pointe's sister course — the Carolina Club, a brawny 7,000-yard brute where the shifting ocean breezes present a constant challenge. The signature hole here is a 166-yard par three with a TPC Sawgrass-inspired island green.

A need-to-know for workers-in-waiting

Aspiration ammo. Four facts every job seeker should know before heading out on the hunt

SHAHEERAH KAYANI
TalentEgg.ca

There's no denying the fact that many hires happen by way of having an 'in' with an organization. Avoid being left out of the loop by getting your name out there as often as you possibly can. ISTOCK

While job hunting is no easy task, knowing the following four facts will help you determine how to best leverage your job seeking methods and up your chances of landing that dream job.

51 per cent of job seekers who use only one method of job-hunting gave up on their job hunt by the second month

According to jobhuntersbible.com, 51 per cent of those who use only one method of job-hunting gave up on their job hunt by the second month.

On the other hand, from the job seekers who are using at least two or more methods, only 31 per cent abandon their search by the second month.

Researchers discovered that job search success rises with each additional method that you use, but only up to four methods.

If you start using five or more job search methods, it will start to hurt your chances of landing a job.

Tip: To maximize your chances of successfully getting a job, devote your time to four proven job search outlets such as networking, LinkedIn, your school's job board and social media.

Most jobs aren't filled by recruiters picking your resumé online

Very few jobs are actually filled by employers or recruiters finding job seekers who posted their resumé on a job board or resumé database.

These databases scan hundreds of resumés for key words, and it next to impossible to make your resumé stand out in this way.

Tip: Instead of posting your resumé on several job boards, a much more effective tactic is to email your resumé to an actual recruiter who will read it with the human eye.

80 per cent of all positions are filled without employer advertising

Employers don't advertise many jobs because it saves time, energy and money during the whole hiring process. There's little need to advertise a job when an employer can simply hire people that they know, or get reliable references, or hire people who actually reach out to them directly.

Tip: Make sure you are always making valuable connections and keeping in touch, whether it's with your professors, past employers or recruiters working at your companies of interest.

Try following up with and contacting recruiters by introducing yourself, outlining your career aspirations and asking for an informational interview.

Reach out to your school's alumni network and start a friendly chat with a fellow grad in your field of interest to learn more about how they transitioned into the workplace. After all, they were once in the same position as you and will be able to give you sound advice.

TALENTEGG.CA IS CANADA'S LEADING JOB SITE AND ONLINE CAREER RESOURCE FOR COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND RECENT GRADUATES.

Tell me on a Sunday please

There's an ideal time to send that email:

- If you are going to be emailing your resumé or reaching out to a recruiter, the best time to email them is on a Sunday or early in the morning.
- As not too many messages come in on Sunday, yours will have a higher chance of getting read.
- According to Alex Moore, CEO of Baydin (an email management service), emails sent between 6 a.m. to 7 a.m. are about three times more likely to be opened than emails sent at 4 p.m. Most employers check their emails in the morning, so make sure yours is right at the top of the pile.

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Earthy and buttery flavours mingle

Porcini-Dusted Fish with Brown Butter Sauce. Use dry mushrooms to create a unique taste

DINNER EXPRESS
Emily Richards
food@metronews.ca

Dried mushrooms offer up a delicious woodsy flavour to fish and the brown butter sauce makes the experience over the top in taste. You will find dried mushrooms in the produce section of the grocery store for this Porcini-Dusted Fish with Brown Butter Sauce recipe.

These fillets are a generous 6 oz (175 g) portions, a bit larger than the 5 oz (150 g) portions sold in stores. Buying larger fillets and cutting them at home gives you that advantage to enjoy a little more fish. Or you can also serve up six 4 oz (125 g) portions with this same recipe.

FLASH FOOD
From your fridge to your table in 30 minutes or less

Ingredients

Fish
- 1 pkg (14 g) dried wild mushrooms
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) finely chopped fresh coriander
- 1 1/2 lbs (750 g) fresh fish such as pickerel, cod or trout
- 1/2 tsp (2 ml) kosher salt
- 3 tbsp (45 ml) butter

Spinach Skillet Side
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) canola oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) minced fresh ginger
- 1 bag (8 oz/227 g) baby spinach leaves
- 1/2 tsp (2 ml) hot pepper sauce (optional)

Fish

1. In clean coffee grinder, grind dried mushrooms to a fine powder. Place in small bowl and add coriander; set aside.

2. Using sharp knife, cut fish into 4 equal portions if fillets are large. Coat each piece with mushroom mixture and place in baking dish. (Make-ahead: Cover and refrigerate for up to 4 hours).

3. Sprinkle fish with salt. In a large nonstick skillet, melt 2 tbsp (25 ml) of the butter over medium-high heat until just starting to brown. Add fish, skin side down, if any and cook for 3 minutes. Transfer to parchment paper lined baking sheet and roast in 425 F (220 C) oven for about 10 minutes or until fish is opaque and flakes easily when tested.

Spinach Skillet Side

A gingery garlic zing matches nicely with spinach to serve up as a side dish for many meals. The added kick of hot pepper sauce adds an almost mellow balance to the dish.

For an added kick, add more hot pepper sauce before serving this side dish.

This recipe serves four. EMILY RICHARDS

To make ahead: Cook up the spinach and then let it cool and refrigerate for up to 1 day. Simply warm it up in a skillet or microwave the next day.

1. In a large non-stick skillet, heat the canola oil over medium heat and cook garlic and ginger, stirring for about 2 minutes or until softened.

2. Add the baby spinach and hot pepper sauce and cook, stirring for about 5 minutes or until spinach is wilted.

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Plenty of back up in this 'street fight'

NBA playoffs. Inside and out, fans are helping fuel Raptors in first-round bout with Brooklyn

Fans have come out in droves and braved cold and wet weather at Maple Leaf Square outside the Air Canada Centre to watch the Raptors' first-round playoff series against the Brooklyn Nets. CARLOS OSORIO/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

In the moments before the Toronto Raptors took the court for Game 4 in Brooklyn, they huddled in the locker-room and watched footage of their fans gathered back home in Maple Leaf Square.

The Raptors went on to win Game 4 and even up the series and say they've drawn inspiration from the swell of support they're receiving in their home city.

"I told the team, the fans are doing their part, we've got to do our part as a team, as a group of guys to lead the fight on the court, because the fans are behind us 100 per cent and they're loud and they're very proud. And they should be," Raptors coach Dwane Casey said.

The Raptors expect a repeat of Sunday, when a capacity crowd of 2,500 red-clad fans jammed Maple Leaf Square to watch the game on the giant screen outside the Air Canada Centre. Thousands more packed the roads leading up to the ACC in a raucous outdoor celebration.

"Oh man, it's unbelievable, our fan base," Raptors point guard Kyle Lowry said. "It makes you want to just be a part of it. Things that we're doing right now and the way the fan base is going out there, we want to go out there and play hard and give them a reason to keep coming back and packing Maple Leaf Square and packing the ACC."

It's been a fierce fight on the court.

Casey said he expects both teams to come out swinging in Game 5 on Wednesday.

"It's not going to be all smiles and bubble gum and fruitcakes ... it's going to be a street fight," Casey said. "That's the way we've got to come out, with that mentality."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mutual admiration

"We need our fans, we love our fans.... We can't wait to see (Wednesday) night, the vibe and the energy we're going to get."

Raptors point guard Kyle Lowry

Raptors to address Sterling situation

The Toronto Raptors say they'll make a gesture of support for the Los Angeles Clippers on Wednesday night over the Donald Sterling controversy.

- "We're united.... You've got to respect that," said Raptors all-star DeMar DeRozan.

"That's the great thing about us. Society is not in that place anymore. You see guys from all different cultures, all different parts of the country, different parts of the world all coming together as one. Comments like that are uncalled for."

Donald Sterling. Playoff boycott was on table before commissioner's ruling

NBA commissioner Adam Silver GETTY IMAGES

NBA players strongly considered boycotting playoff games if commissioner Adam Silver hadn't ruled harshly against Los Angeles Clippers owner Donald Sterling.

Players' union vice-president Roger Mason Jr. says he spoke to representatives from every playoff team about the possibility of boycotting games in solidarity against any ruling that didn't include a mandate for Sterling to sell the Clippers.

The Clippers hosted the Golden State Warriors Tuesday night.

Mason says the players are very happy with Silver's decision to ban Sterling for life while urging the NBA's board of governors to compel Sterling to sell the Clippers.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mike likes

"I applaud NBA commissioner Adam Silver's swift and decisive response today. He sent a powerful message that there can be zero tolerance for racism and hatred in the NBA."

NBA legend and Charlotte Bobcats owner Michael Jordan

OHL

Battalion forward banned 20 games

The OHL handed North Bay Battalion right-winger Mike Baird a 20-game suspension Tuesday.

The disciplinary action stems from a category one penalty for physical abuse of an official during a playoff game against the Barrie Colts on April 10.

Baird, who was suspended indefinitely after the incident, is ineligible to play in the post-season. The ban includes the six games that the Battalion have played since April 11.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

MLB

Harper hurting again, this time it's his thumb

Washington outfielder Bryce Harper had surgery on his injured left thumb on Tuesday.

Manager Matt Williams would not commit to a time frame but said, "that time frame is out there" after reports Monday that he would be out until at least July.

The two-time all-star was placed on the 15-day disabled list on Sunday with what was then called a sprained left thumb.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NBA playoffs

Mavericks' Blair high kicks his way out of Game 5

Dallas Mavericks centre DeJuan Blair has been suspended for Game 5 of the first-round series against San Antonio for kicking the Spurs' Tiago Splitter in the head.

Blair and Splitter got tangled up and fell to the court in the fourth quarter of San Antonio's 93-89 victory in Dallas on Monday night. After the whistle blew, signalling a foul on Blair, he kicked his former teammate with his left foot.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mavs forward DeJuan Blair GETTY IMAGES

Wicked Strong boasts Beantown backbone

Exercise rider Kelvin Pahal takes Kentucky Derby hopeful Wicked Strong for a morning workout at Churchill Downs Tuesday in Louisville, Ky. Wicked Strong has a built-in fan base for the Kentucky Derby — the entire city of Boston. The colt named in honour of the victims of last year's Boston Marathon bombings figures to be among the favourites for Saturday's race. He's got the credentials, having impressively won the Wood Memorial at 9-1 odds. Wicked Strong is owned by a Boston-based partnership that has pledged to donate five per cent of any money won by the bay colt during the Triple Crown series to the fund set up for the bombing victims. Scan the above image with the Metro News app to view a gallery of Tuesday's events at Churchill Downs.

ROB CARR/GETTY IMAGES

Sharks get one final shot at ousting Kings

NHL playoffs. L.A. has dug itself out of 3-0 series deficit for a chance to advance past opening round

It should come as no shock that the Los Angeles Kings and San Jose Sharks are preparing for a Game 7 in their first-round series considering how tightly contested this fierce California rivalry has been over the last few years.

The surprise is how the teams got to Wednesday night's win-or-go-home game.

The Sharks were dominant early, winning the first three games and making former playoff MVP Jonathan Quick look rather pedestrian as he allowed 16 goals in those losses.

The Sharks' Tommy Wingels checks the Kings' Anze Kopitar on Monday in Los Angeles. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

But the Kings responded to win three straight games by three goals to force the showdown in San Jose for a spot in the second round against Anaheim.

"We understand what's at stake," Sharks forward Joe Pavelski said. "There was the possibility the series was going to go to seven. We probably didn't think it was going to get there this way, but we're here now and guys will be ready to play."

The Kings are the ninth team to force a Game 7 after losing the first three games. Three of the previous eight finished the job although the Sharks can take solace in the fact that they avoided that same collapse in 2011 when they rebounded from three straight losses to beat Detroit 3-2 at home to advance to the Western Conference finals.

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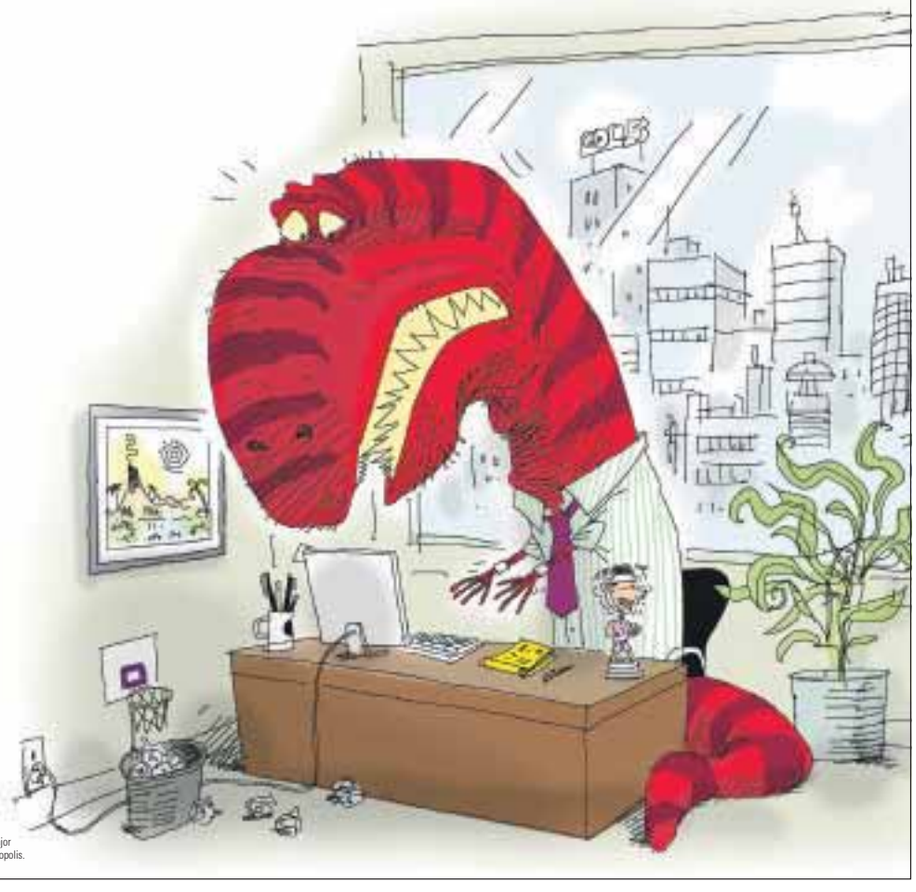


See that symbol? It means you can scan the photo below with your Metro News app. By the numbers! Learn more about the 2015 Honda Fit

DRIVE 5

2015 Honda Fit

- **Type.** Four-door, front-wheel drive compact wagon
- **Engines (hp).** 1.5-litre DOHC 14 (130)
- **Transmissions.** Six-speed manual; continuously variable (CVT)
- **Base price (incl. destination).** $16,000

Market position

The range of small models continues to hold steady, with redesigned versions now being adorned with more standard and optional content. This tends to attract buyers who prefer all the goodies in a smaller package.

Points

- Redesigned top to bottom, but retains similar look
- New four-cylinder engine ups power while slightly improving fuel economy
- CVT saves fuel, but isn't as smooth as traditional automatic
- All-new, larger HR-V wagon based on Fit platform due to arrive early next year
- Impressive people, cargo space makes Fit tops in small wagon class

The Fit has been lauded for its fun-to-drive qualities.

Safety

Front airbags; side-impact airbags; side-curtain airbags; anti-lock brakes; traction control; stability control.

Honda's latest is a perfect Fit

PHOTOS: WHEELBASEMEDIA.COM

Review. This mighty little hatchback keeps drivers thinking they're ensconced in a larger vehicle

MALCOLM GUNN
wheelbasemedia.com

"The penalty box of life."

Jeff Conrad, Honda's senior vice president and general manager, uses that phrase in reference to the Fit's small-car competitors. And when comparing the latest edition of Honda's mighty little hatchback to the rest of the field, he may well have a point.

Since the car's 2007 arrival, critics have lauded its fun-to-drive qualities and impressive carrying capacity. And with few exceptions, the newest and smallest of Hondas that are now arriving from their plant in Mexico should receive similar accolades.

The Fit sticks to a proven formula: Keep the size and weight in check; keep the body lean and spacious; and keep drivers and passengers thinking they're ensconced in a vehicle that's larger than it actually is.

Despite being physically and dimensionally similar (a tiny bit wider and longer in distance between the front and rear wheels, but slightly shorter, overall), the Fit actually looks bigger, which is partly a function of more prominent bodyside creases and fenders that bulge out around the wheel openings. Also, the wraparound headlight pods integrate with the grille and no longer extend alongside the hood. Getting the Fit underway is now the job of a new 1.5-litre four-cylinder engine that delivers 130 horsepower and 114 pound-feet of torque, compared to 117 horses and 106 pound-feet of torque for the previous 1.5.

The previous Fit set the bar pretty high, so it's no real surprise that the interior feels richer than the entry price.

Directing power to the front wheels is handled by a new six-speed manual transmission, or equally new continuously variable unit (CVT) option. Honda offers an automatic sport mode with paddle shifters, but ultimately it's no substitute for a multi-speed automatic, even if the latter tends to be slightly less fuel-efficient. Fortunately the standard six-cog manual gearbox is there to save the day.

Despite the more powerful engine, the Fit's fuel consumption is an impressive 7.0 l/100 km in the city and 5.7 on the highway, compared to 7.1/5.4 with the previous five-speed automatic transmission. The less fuel-efficient six-speed manual is rated at 8.1/6.4.

Compare

1 Ford Fiesta Hatchback
Base price: $16,200
Sharp styling, three-cylinder turbo option make Fiesta a popular pick.

2 Nissan Versa Note
Base price: $14,900
Low-priced wagon holds an impressive amount of stuff. Easy on gas.

3 Chevrolet Sonic Hatchback
Base price: $16,000
Junior-sized Chevy also comes in sedan version, as do other competitors.

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Some people won't hesitate to part you from your cash if they can see a way to do it. Don't be suspicious of everyone you meet today but remember there are bad guys in the world.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
There is no doubt you will achieve much over the next few weeks but you will achieve even more if you can persuade others to take on the boring chores, giving you more time for things that really matter.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
You may have to get tough with someone who has let you down. Don't go over the top and create unnecessary resentment but do make sure they realize this is the last warning they'll get.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
It's not easy being a role model but if anyone can do it you can. Be on your best behaviour today, set a good example and only do what is inspiring.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
You will come in for criticism of today but if you are smart, you will ignore it completely. At best it is misguided, at worst it is sour grapes. The fact is some people envy you for being such a larger-than-life character.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Accusations will fly thick and fast today but none of the mud that is thrown will stick to you. It's not that you are whiter-than-white — you just know how to disguise what you do better than most people!

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You must not take unnecessary risks today, especially with money. Keep your cash in your pocket and don't let anyone, no matter how smooth-talking, persuade you there is easy money to be made.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Cosmic activity in your opposite sign of Taurus means you won't get far on your own over the next few days, so let partners and loved ones and work colleagues know you need and value their support.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Don't worry too much if you get behind in your work because there will be plenty of time to catch up later on. It would help, of course, if you were not so willing to take on other people's tasks.

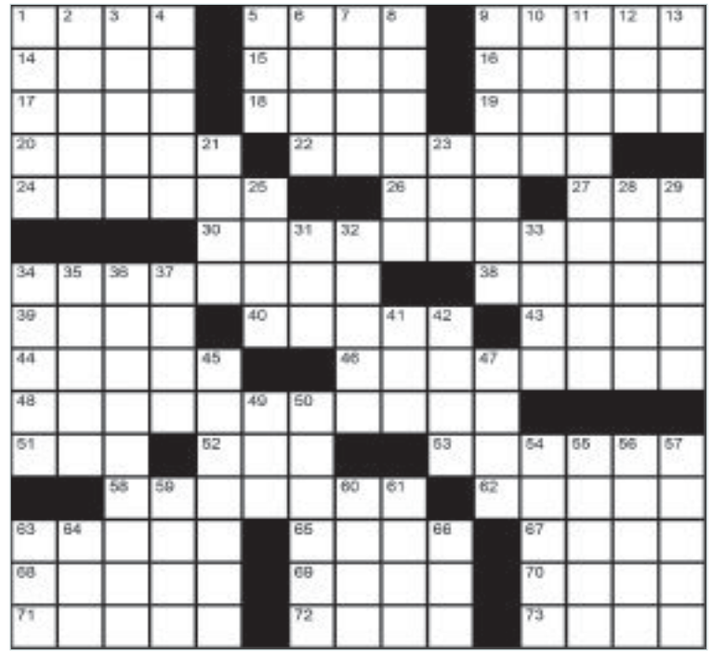
♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Anything of a creative nature will go well for you but it will go even better if you make an effort to bring other people into your plans. Friends and loved loves want to help.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Focus on helping others today. Everyone knows you're talented but what they may not know is that you get a huge kick from doing good for others.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Socially, this will be a great day but some of your friends may be angry that you are spending more time with new acquaintances than you are with them. You can't help if you're popular. **SALLY BROMPTON**

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

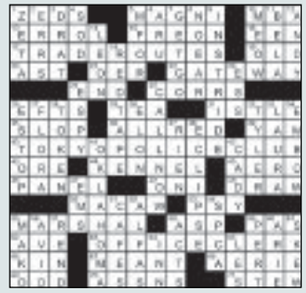
See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Seasoning sort
5. Breeze
9. Swift
14. Nursemaid
15. Really rain
16. "The Jetsons" son
17. Low-cal
18. Yesteryear
19. BBQ cut
20. Ms. Ekberg
22. Motto of outstanding achievement honour the Order of Canada: Desiderantes Meliorem __ (They desire a better country)
24. Mr. Sutherland
26. Midmorning time
27. Couch break
30. "Which Way You Goin' Billy?" by Canadian band The __ __
34. Spinning-in-the-wind toy
38. Iceland band, __ Ros
39. Dosage, __ _ day
40. Steam bath
43. "The King's Speech" (2010) actress Jennifer
44. Fighting: 2 wds.
46. HST = Harmonized __ __
48. 1840s: The Great Famine led families to emigrate from Ireland to Canada by way of '__ __', so-called because of the many who died from the putrid conditions on board
51. Vertical's opp.
52. Morning grass stuff
53. Shania Twain's "Don't Be __ (You Know I Love You)"
58. Shake
62. Steeple
63. Carpentry joint part
65. Cab
67. Spare
68. Disguised, informally
69. Happy as a __
70. Barenaked Ladies title lady
71. Wants
72. __ seed oil
73. Heavy weight units [var. sp.]

Down
1. Lunchtime greenery
2. __ acid
3. Fancy tongue
4. 8th Greek letter
5. Operative
6. Fun-style negative
7. Etheric emanation
8. "__ Woman" (1990)
9. Eyes parts
10. Dawn love song
11. 1980 horror flick starring actor Leslie Nielsen: 2 wds.
12. 'Restrict' suffix
13. Tie-__
21. Rush's "Xanadu" bit: "To seek the sacred river __..."
23. Athletics authority [abbr.]
25. Performs
28. 1956 rocker: "Be-Bop-_-__"
29. Heat-resistant glassware
31. Fairy princess annoyance
32. Lavish
33. Architect, Ludwig __ van der Rohe
34. Illegally hunt
35. __ __ deep (Over one's head)
36. Region of The New World for Samuel de Champlain: 2 wds.
37. WWII RAF support gr.
41. B'__ B'rith
42. Snow-capped sights
45. Papineau, for Justin Trudeau ...and Outremont, for Thomas Mulcair
47. Approx. figures
49. Clear
50. Swiss timepiece brand
54. Disturb
55. Middle C site
56. Dick __, Jr. (Broadcasting legend)
57. Feats
59. Fine
60. Story
61. Test
63. Can
64. Opposite WSW
66. Gremlin

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

	4		9			5	8	
3				2		6		4
7				5				
	7	3			4		2	
				8				
	9		3			4	1	
				9				1
5		6		1				9
	1	2			8		3	

Yesterday's Sudoku

1	6	8	8	3	5	2	7	4
4	2	7	1	9	6	5	3	8
3	8	5	4	7	2	9	6	1
7	5	1	6	4	3	8	9	2
6	4	2	9	5	8	7	1	3
8	9	3	7	2	1	6	4	5
5	7	8	3	8	4	1	2	9
2	1	4	5	6	9	3	8	7
9	3	8	2	1	7	4	5	6

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